

June 5, 2002

### **Public Notice for 401 Certification**

#### **Highway 101 Grade and Widening (PM 9.4/9.7) Del Norte County**

On March 15, 2002, the application from California Department of Transportation (CDOT) requesting Federal Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification for the Highway 101 Grade and Widening (PM 9.4/9.7) was received by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board). The application was deemed complete on April 4, 2002. The application covers disturbances to waters of the United States associated with Klamath River Hydrologic Unit No. 105.00.

The proposed project will be located along Highway 101 from post mile 9.4 to 9.7, just north of the High Prairie Creek Bridge in Del Norte County. The purpose of the project is to reduce flooding along a section of Highway 101 between PM 9.4/9.7. Previous flooding has caused periodic road closures along this stretch of Highway 101. The highway will be raised and widened from post mile 9.4 to 9.7 (1,427 ft) on Route 101, just to the north of the High Prairie Creek bridge in Del Norte County. The work requires dredging 1,250 cubic meters and filling 3,710 cubic meters. The project will require temporary de-watering of an unnamed drainage ditch at post mile 9.53, which is a tributary to Salt Creek. It also requires improving drainage culverts and filling approximately 0.15 ha (0.36 ac) of wetlands. Temporary impacts include site disturbance of an additional 0.54 ha (1.33 ac) of wetlands from construction activities, diversion of the ditch for de-watering the work area, disturbance of roadside vegetation for access, and a short-term decrease in water quality due to diversion installation and removal. Consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service concluded that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the listed coho salmon. No other listed or proposed species are present.

Mitigation measures for this project include performing all excavation from the highway embankment. Additionally, a Mitigation and Monitoring Proposal has been developed to offset the impacts to wetlands. Mitigation for this project will be attained through the creation of freshwater marsh and riparian wetlands adjacent to Elk Creek. Wetlands will be created on 0.4 acre on each side of Elk Creek in the southwest quadrant of the Washington Blvd/101 Freeway overpass in Crescent City. The mitigation site is currently highly disturbed uplands in the Caltrans right-of-way.

The California Department of Transportation (CDOT), as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project qualifies for Categorical Exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The nearest receiving water, an unnamed tributary to Salt Creek, is located within the Klamath River Hydrologic Unit No. 105.00.

Work is scheduled to begin in June 2002 and end in November 2003. All in-stream work will be performed between June 15 and October 15 to minimize impacts to salmonids. Staff is proposing to regulate this project under a conditional water quality certification pursuant to the California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Chapter 28, Sections 3830 to 3869. Comments on this project should be submitted to **Ben Zabinsky** at [zabib@rbl.swrcb.ca.gov](mailto:zabib@rbl.swrcb.ca.gov), within 21 days of the posting of this notice.